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ECONOMIC POLICY BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

JULY 22, 1976
8:30 a.m.

ROOSEVELT ROOM

PRINCIPALS ONLY

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Report of Task Force on Productivity | CEA |
| 2. Trade Policy Monthly Status Report | STR |

MINUTES OF THE
ECONOMIC POLICY BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

July 21, 1976

Attendees: Messrs. Seidman, Lynn, Richardson, Dixon, Zarb, Cannon, Gorog, Porter, Perritt, Darman, Penner, MacAvoy, Harper, Hormats, Leach, Reichley, Spaulding

1. Questionable Payments Legislation

Mr. Seidman reported that the President had approved submission of questionable payments legislation with provision for reporting and limited disclosure with discretionary safeguards in relation to interests of foreign policy and the judicial process. The discussion focused on the timing and vehicle for transmitting the legislation to Congress.

Decision

Secretary Richardson was requested to prepare a draft Presidential statement and questions and answers on the issue by c.o.b. today. OMB will expedite the proposed bill through the legislative clearance process.

2. Maritime Policy

Secretary Richardson reported on progress in examining the US/ USSR oil and grain shipments problem and Soviet compliance with the terms of the Maritime Agreement. He indicated that a paper on the subject would be ready sometime next week.

3. Report of Task Force on Banking Regulation

The Executive Committee reviewed the report of the Task Force on Banking Regulation. The discussion focused on the distribution of responsibility among banking regulatory agencies, the adequacy of present enforcement powers, new developments in

banking practices including NOW accounts, electronic transfer of funds and variable rate mortgages, the alternatives for structural reform outlined by the Task Force, and a review of the current status of legislation pending in the Congress relating to banking regulation and financial institutional reforms.

Decision

The Task Force was requested to expand their consideration of the impact of the present structure of divided regulatory responsibility both on promoting innovation and fostering duplication and overlap of responsibilities. The Executive Committee also requested the Task Force to explore the potential for holding public hearings on possible changes in the banking regulatory structure and on possible experimental changes, including better coordination between Federal and State bank examiners.

4. Report of Task Forces on Improving Government Regulation

The Executive Committee reviewed a draft memorandum to the President on the "Status of Task Forces to Improve Government Regulation." The discussion focused on the progress of the OSHA, FEA, and Export Control Administration Task Forces and the potential for the establishment of additional task forces.

5. East-West Economic Relations

Mr. Seidman reported that a proposal was being prepared for the establishment of an EPB/NSC East-West Economic Relations Coordinating Committee.

6. Other

The Executive Committee will not meet on Friday, July 23, as originally scheduled.

COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS
WASHINGTON

ALAN GREENSPAN, CHAIRMAN
PAUL W. MACAVOY
BURTON G. MALKIEL

July 21, 1976

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ECONOMIC POLICY BOARD

FROM: ^{pm} Paul W. MacAvoy and ^{BSM} Burton G. Malkiel

SUBJECT: Interagency Task Force on Productivity Growth

At the request of the Economic Policy Board, the Council of Economic Advisers has organized an Inter-agency Task Force to study the apparent recent slowdown in productivity growth, the prospects for the future, and policy initiatives that might increase productivity. In addition to the Council of Economic Advisers the Task Force includes representatives of the Department of Commerce (including the Bureau of Economic Analysis), the Department of Labor (BLS), and the National Commission on Productivity and Work Quality.

In its initial meeting the Task Force surveyed the analytical work on important factors affecting productivity which in turn can be affected by national policy. These factors may be grouped under three broad headings:

(1) Human Resources

Productivity growth is affected by changes in the education, experience, and skill level of the labor force. Policies that might increase the education and skill levels of the labor force will be carefully examined. Other related composition effects may not be susceptible to policy influence. For example, shifts in the composition of output toward the service sector and away from sectors experiencing both a higher level and greater productivity growth may be induced by changes in consumer preferences for outputs. But regulations on employment which emphasizes restrictions on entry and on introduction of new techniques should be examined for impact on productivity growth.



(2) Technology and Capital Investment

Research and development is believed to affect productivity growth rates, although the extent of the affects is controversial. R&D outlays have dropped as a percentage of GNP, possibly because of tax and government expenditure policies. Moreover, part of the U.S. capital stock may have been "destroyed" during the recent inflationary period as sharp changes in relative prices have made obsolete some part of our industrial plant that was put in place on the basis of a different price structure. The somewhat lower ratios of investment to GNP in recent years may also have contributed to a decline in productivity growth. Government policies affecting investment and research spending will be studied.

(3) Government Regulation

Government regulation may have contributed to reduced productivity growth. Wage and price controls may have adversely affected investment in the early 1970's. Regulatory lags may have affected investment notably in energy, transportation, communications, and agriculture. Some investment in capital goods mandated for the purpose of increasing the "quality of life" may have substituted for investment which would have increased output as it is normally defined.

By carefully examining such areas the Task Force hopes to be able to make preliminary statements within one month concerning (a) the nature of the productivity problem; (b) the possible sources of slower productivity growth; and (c) possible government policy actions to increase productivity.

Interagency representatives will work under CEA staff direction in developing a draft position paper. We will aim for completion of the paper during the week of August 16 and would expect to report to the EPB during the week of August 23.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 21, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR ECONOMIC POLICY BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FROM: L. WILLIAM SEIDMAN *fws*

SUBJECT: July Status Report on International Trade

A copy of the July Status Report on International Trade, prepared by the Office of the Special Representative for Trade Negotiations, is attached. This report will be discussed at the Thursday, July 22 Executive Committee meeting.

The Executive Committee will not meet on Friday, July 23, as originally scheduled.

Attachment




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THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR
TRADE NEGOTIATIONS
WASHINGTON

July 21, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR HONORABLE L. WILLIAM SEIDMAN
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS

FROM: Ambassador Frederick B. Dent 

SUBJECT: July Status Report on International Trade

For consideration by the EPB Executive Committee on Friday morning, July 23, I am forwarding a copy of the July Status Report on International Trade and look forward to briefing the members on these matters at that time.

Enclosure

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JULY STATUS REPORT
ON
INTERNATIONAL TRADE

During the first five months of 1976 U.S. exports and imports were running at record high levels -- up 3% and 16% respectively from a year earlier. With imports valued on a CIF basis our five-month trade deficit is \$4.4 billion.

Pressures for restrictive trade actions which were prevalent earlier in many countries have declined significantly in the last few months as a result of a continuing improvement in economic conditions. This improved economic outlook, however, has so far not been translated into faster progress in the multilateral trade negotiations, partly because of the political uncertainty created by impending elections or government changes in a number of countries, and partly because of continuing high levels of unemployment. The outlook for more rapid progress after the end of this year is promising, provided effective U.S. leadership is exerted.

The major current issues in international trade revolve around the sensitive agricultural trade relationship between the United States and European Economic Community. The major source of difficulty has been a large surplus of non-fat dry milk in the EC, which induced the EC to require the mixing of dry milk into domestic feedstuffs, and which has also led to a proposal for a tax on EC imports of vegetable oil. The United States has vigorously protested the adverse impact of these measures on U.S. exports of soybeans.

The dispute between the U.S. and the EC over the disposal of dry milk is symptomatic of the problems that will continue to arise, unless the U.S. and the EC can work out some acceptable solutions to the agricultural trade problem in the multilateral trade negotiations. The specific issue of the adverse impact of U.S. soybean exports is likely to be ameliorated, however, as the current drought in Western Europe reduces the size of dairy herds, and the level of milk production in Europe. The drought in Europe has led to the slaughter of EC cattle and to a projected 15 percent decline in the EC grain crop. The drought is also likely to have a wider adverse economic impact on the European Community, particularly in France. The French trade balance is expected



to deteriorate by about \$1 billion, and the inflation rate in France is expected to rise from a projected 10% rate to a projected 11% rate.

A projected Japanese trade surplus of over \$6 billion as well as a record trade surplus with the U.S. is causing some notice worldwide, in view of the fact that strong economies are being urged to support troubled ones through prudent trade policies.

I. International Cooperative Efforts

A. Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Work in the MTN is continuing on a whole range of negotiating issues, but few difficult political issues will be resolved this year. The United States is continuing to take the lead by tabling initial negotiating proposals in the various negotiating groups.

Tariffs: On March 23, the United States tabled its proposal for a tariff negotiating plan, including a set of general rules for the tariff negotiations and a specific tariff formula. The summing up statement by the chairman at the end of the meeting showed a wide degree of consensus on the general goals the U.S. had proposed. A response to the specific tariff cutting formula proposed by the United States did not come until the first week in July, when the EC made a counter proposal. While the U.S. proposal (which covered both industrial and agricultural products) would result in an average cut in duties of 58%, the EC proposal (which excludes agriculture) would result in an average cut of about 32% on industrial products.

Safeguards: On July 19, the United States tabled a concept paper, which outlined the "basic elements" of a new international safeguard code. The new safeguard code would not replace existing GATT provisions such as Article XIX which deals with temporary import measures, but would supplement such existing provisions. Under the new code, countries would be relieved of the compensation obligation and retaliation liability, provided their safeguard action met the more stringent requirements of the code.

GATT Reform: Brazil has proposed the creation of a new negotiating group in the multilateral trade negotiations to deal with GATT reform. While the LDC's are clearly interested in advancing their own concerns in such a new GATT reform group, the Trade Act of 1974 also directs the President to seek a variety of GATT reform objectives, some of which might be achieved in such a group. At the



meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee, which has not yet been scheduled, the LDC's are likely to push forcefully for the creation of a GATT reform group. Before then, the U.S. will have to decide how its interests are best served.

Tropical Products: On March 1, the United States offered to reduce duties on 140 tropical product items of interest to developing countries, in exchange for specified trade liberalizing measures of benefit to U.S. exporters. While 10 other developed countries have offered trade concessions on tropical products, the United States was the only country to request parallel contributions from the developing countries. The LDC's have argued, and the other developed countries have agreed, that their contributions in the context of the MTN should come in a single package at the end of the negotiations. The U.S. position is that its request for parallel contributions is consistent with the Tokyo Declaration, and needs to be viewed in the light of unilateral trade concessions offered to developing countries on January 1, 1976, through the implementation of GSP benefits. We may be heading for a confrontation on this issue in the fall.

B. OECD

Trade Pledge: At the meeting of OECD ministers in June, OECD governments once again made a best-efforts commitment to avoid the use of trade restrictive measures, particularly across the board restrictions to deal with balance of payments or broad sectoral problems. This so-called OECD trade pledge was renewed with a fairly widespread assumption that this was the last year that the pledge would be renewed, at least in its current form. The OECD Trade Committee has been asked to study the issue, and to explore possible alternatives. The U.S. Government should decide by the end of this year its own position on this question.

North/South Trade Relations: OECD ministers also agreed in June to seek closer cooperation among OECD governments in negotiations with developing countries on trade issues. At a subsequent meeting of the Trade Committee it was agreed to explore ways in which such closer cooperation can be implemented. It is clear that other OECD countries are looking for U.S. leadership on this question, and the U.S. must therefore formulate some constructive proposals in the near future.

East/West Trade Relations: Secretary Kissinger suggested at the OECD ministerial that the OECD countries seek closer cooperation on issues of East/West trade relations.



U.S. representatives made some initial suggestions for a work program toward this end at a subsequent meeting of the OECD Executive Committee Special Session. The members of the OECD Trade Committee have also expressed an interest in the subject, and they are looking forward to more concrete U.S. suggestions.

II. Status of GSP

Since the implementation of our GSP program on January 1, 1976, there has been surprisingly little vocal domestic or foreign criticism, though there has been a similar lack of vocal domestic support. Developing countries have generally welcomed the trade opportunities provided, although they have criticized the exclusion of OPEC members. Domestic opposition has been largely limited to specific industries, whose opposition has been effectively channeled by their opportunity to petition the government for removal of their products from the GSP list.

Hearings were held in early June on 41 petitions, of which 40 were for the deletion of items and one was for the addition of an item. The Trade Policy Staff Committee unanimously recommended that 29 requests for deletion be denied, 2 be granted and 4 be postponed. It also recommended that the request for the addition of an item be granted. Interagency differences over the treatment of 5 requests for deletion were sent to the President for decision.

III. Current Trade Issues

A. Agricultural Issues with the EC

1. Non-Fat Dry Milk Disposal System: In March of 1976, the EC instituted a compulsory purchase program for non-fat dry milk. This program requires animal feed distributors to mix a proportion of non-fat dry milk into feed sold to EC farmers. It has an adverse impact on U.S. agricultural interest, by displacing U.S. exports of soybean meal.

On March 30, 1976, the National Soybean Processors Association and the American Soybean Association filed a Section 301 complaint, requesting that remedial actions be taken by the U.S. Government against an unfair trade practice by the EC. The U.S. initiated bilateral consultations with the EC in April, but these consultations did not lead to removal or modification of the regulations satisfactory to the United States. Accordingly, the U.S. requested at the



July 15 meeting of the GATT Council that a panel of experts be formed to investigate the GATT legality of the program. We have reserved the right to call a special session of the Council for a consideration of the U.S. request.

2. Minimum Import Prices: A minimum import price and surety deposit system on processed fruits and vegetables was implemented by the European Community in September of 1975. A Section 301 complaint was filed by the National Canners Association on September 22, 1975 against these EC practices. The United States initiated consultations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in March of 1976. These consultations did not lead to a successful removal or modifications of the program satisfactory to the United States. Accordingly, the United States requested the GATT Council to form a panel of experts to investigate the legality of the system under the GATT. The Council agreed to the creation of such a panel at the July 15 GATT Council meeting.

3. The Poultry/Cognac Issue: In the context of the 24:6 negotiations with the European Community the United States increased the price-break on cognac from \$9 to \$17, thereby reducing the duty for a two-year period on cognac priced between \$9 and \$17. This action was taken by the United States with the understanding that steps would be taken by the EC to reduce its restrictions on chicken. The two-year period expired on July 1 and we have been under strong pressure from the domestic poultry industry to rollback the price break, in the absence of meaningful concessions by the EC and the French on poultry.

In recent weeks intensive high-level discussions have been held with EC and French officials in an effort to resolve the poultry/cognac problem. We have indicated to the EC and French our minimum conditions for resolving this problem. If this matter is not resolved prior to the August vacation period, we expect to publish a Federal Register Notice of our intent to rollback the cognac price break.

B. ITC Investigations

1. Investigation of Japanese Television Imports: On March 29 the ITC began an investigation under Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 of allegations of unfair methods of competition against several producers and importers of



Japanese television sets. A few days later, the ITC on its own motion, initiated a preliminary investigation to determine whether the Section 337 investigations should be broadened to include all Japanese television imports. The investigation covers \$350 million in imports. The unfair methods of competition which were alleged include subsidization, dumping, predatory pricing and antitrust violations.

The Japanese are deeply concerned about this investigation and have raised it on several occasions with United States officials. Under the law, the ITC must reach a decision no later than September 1977. Should the decision be affirmative, the ITC must then recommend (1) the exclusion of offending imports or (2) issue a cease and desist order. However, within 60 days after the positive ITC determination the President may, for "policy reasons", override any action taken. A Presidential override is not subject to review and nullifies any USITC action.

The U.S. television industry is deeply concerned by a recent surge in imports of color television sets (19 inches or smaller). The domestic market penetration has jumped from about 20% a year ago to about 40% in May of this year. Since the initial complaint (by GTE) increasing concern has been expressed by the whole industry.

2. Recommendation on Honey: The ITC recently recommended the establishment of a tariff rate quota on honey, in response to a petition by the industry for remedial action against an injurious increase in imports. The President may decide by August 28, on whether to grant import relief to the domestic honey industry.

C. GATT Review of DISC and Other Tax Practices

Earlier this year the GATT Council established a panel of experts to investigate the GATT legality of the U.S. DISC program and similar tax practices by certain European countries. The panel will have its next meeting at the end of July, when it is expected to complete its deliberations. A decision is expected in September. If they find that the DISC is legal under the GATT, the U.S. would have a strong basis for maintaining the program or to use its possible elimination as a negotiating lever in the negotiation of a subsidy code in the MTN. If they find that the DISC is GATT illegal, and this decision is endorsed by the GATT Council, the U.S. would be expected to adjust its practice with the finding.



D. Leakages in the Beef Import Program

Serious concern has been expressed in recent days about the evasion of U.S. restrictions on beef imports through increased imports of processed beef. The question is being investigated to determine the possible dimension of the problem, and possible remedies.

IV. PEC-PICEE Joint Meeting July 13, 1976

Secretary Richardson presided at the first joint meeting of the President's Export Council (pvt. sector chief executive officers) and President's Interagency Committee on Export Expansion.

The PEC members urged a strong, consistent foreign trade policy that reflects the competitive nature of world markets, the interdependence of nations, the relative strengthening of other industrial nations vs the U.S., and the importance of multinational enterprises to world economic development.

They were also concerned about equitable tax and investment policies as well as having export credit available on a competitive basis with foreign competition. Emphasis was also placed upon the importance of recognizing the growing trade potential for the LDC's upon whom we are also dependent for raw materials.

Summaries of two PEC presentations are attached.

Attachments



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U. S. POLICY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Outline of a Presentation to
Combined PEC and PICEE Meeting
Washington, D. C.
July 13, 1976

By Reginald H. Jones
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
General Electric Company

1. NEED FOR A CONSISTENT, FUTURE-ORIENTED POLICY.

A. End of the Post-war Era (1945-75).

1. Rise of Japan and Europe to essential parity in industrial productivity. No longer our dependents, or even our most important future customers. Now essentially our competitors in world markets. And they have put exports at the center of their economic policy, with their governments offering strong, consistent support to export industries and multinationals that operate on a world scale.
2. Rise of the new nations -- ex-colonial, nationalistic, often anti-capitalist, determined to extract every advantage from their economic and political resources. Demand for New Economic Order
 - a. The resource-rich nations -- our most important, fastest growing customers for high-technology products. But also the source of much-needed fuel and raw materials. The new focal point for foreign economic, military, and political policy attention.
 - b. The resource-poor nations -- desperate, hungry, in need of help, yet seldom supportive of our political philosophy.
3. Emergence of a world economy: interdependent, with worldwide competition for markets and resources and jobs. Worldwide companies a natural outcome and a positive development.



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- B. The new energy economics, forcing Japan and Europe to export more in order to obtain imported oil. Current U.S. policies making us increasingly dependent on OPEC oil. Food as an offset for U.S., but agriculture provides very few jobs.
- C. The new sensitivity of the jobs issue in the U.S., with chronic-unemployment. Thus, a fear of imports, and rising protectionism.
- D. And the current situation -- trade deficits coming in 1976, '77, with impact on income and jobs. No time to make it even tougher for U.S. exporters.

2. EVIDENCE OF LACK OF A POLICY.

- A. Congressional attacks on multinationals, with labor, academic, and media support. Yet these are the chief source of our exports and our foreign-source income.
- B. The Congressional attempts to repeal foreign tax credits and deferral -- standard practice around the world; to repeal DISC and other incentives to export; to discourage or penalize foreign investment; to cut back Ex-Im Bank; to rely on such uncertainties as devaluation (again!) and GATT negotiations (important as they are) to solve our trade problems.
- C. Uncertain approaches to development of foreign economic policy in relation to LDC's.
- D. Piecemeal approach to trade issues; no coherent and consistent statement of our trade and investment policy to give guidance to executive and legislative decision-makers. No identification of the importance of trade and investment policy to the public interest. Not even an adequate data base to show the effects of trade and investment on U.S. and world economy.

3. ELEMENTS OF A FUTURE-ORIENTED INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY

- A. Acknowledgement of the changed world: Japan and Europe our powerful competitors; LDC's our fastest-growing customers; increasing dependence of U.S. on exports and imports (especially oil and raw materials).



- B. Public and Government recognition of the importance of our multinational companies to the health of the U.S. economy--in terms of jobs, income, capital. (Must have a better data base, but can't wait for it.)
- C. Consistency. Year-after-year determination to keep U.S. industry fully competitive in world markets.
- D. Policy objectives in this context:
1. Long-term balanced trade position, with emphasis on exporting high-technology products that provide high-paying jobs. (Agriculture brings dollars, but not jobs.)
 2. Realistic rates of currency exchange, that do not disadvantage U.S. exporters.
 3. Reduction of non-tariff barriers to free, fair trade with the industrialized nations. Importance of GATT negotiations.
 4. Stability in tax treatment of foreign source income.
 5. Credit neutrality, or offsets to foreign credit subsidies via Export-Import Bank.
 6. Harmonization of the international rules on treatment of foreign investment.
 7. Where required, U.S. export incentives to offset tax advantages, financing arrangements, reciprocity agreements, and other support provided by foreign governments to their exporters and multinationals. DISC is only one modest example of an offset.
 8. Export Promotion: Recognition of the importance of U.S. Government export promotion, assistance and services.
 9. Mutually advantageous trade and investment relations with the developing nations; neither to exploit them or submit to exploitation by them.



MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS
INVESTMENT, TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY, THIRD WORLD DIALOGUE

Outline of A Presentation to
A Combined Meeting of the President's Export Council and
The President's Interagency Committee on
Export Expansion

By J. Paul Lyet
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Sperry Rand Corporation

July 13, 1976

0 OBJECTIVES OF THESE REMARKS

- to second the need which Reginald Jones has expressed for a future-oriented foreign trade policy for the United States -- a policy coordinated in such a way as to assure the support of all branches of the U.S. government, the Lesser Developed Countries (LDC's) and U.S. private industry.
- to show that this policy must establish the basis for a mutually advantageous trade and investment relationship between U.S. multinationals (MNC's) and the LDC's.

0 LDC'S CAN BE OUR FUTURE GROWTH CUSTOMERS

- Europe and Japan, while good customers, are our competitors, strongly supported by their governments

0 LDC'S ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT SOURCES OF OUR RAW MATERIALS AND OIL

- the LDC's are aware that they possess these strategic materials
- they can and have used this fact as leverage to obtain economic concessions and as a basis for cartels
- international forums have sanctioned such actions



O OUR POLICY MUST RECOGNIZE THAT WE NEED EACH OTHER

- LDC's have the raw materials. We have expertise, markets, capital.
- Western Europe and Japan generally have a greater reliance on strategic raw material imports than does U.S. Thus, it is not coincidental that the governments of those countries have adopted favorable trade policies which have facilitated activities of their MNC's in LDC's
- Our dependence on foreign supply should instill a sense of urgency within our government

O INVESTMENT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- MNC's and U.S. government must have greater sensitivity to LDC's needs and capabilities, MNC's must be industrial citizens of LDC's.
- At the same time, we must face the very real issue of diverging interests of LDC's and U.S. MNC's
- Why is there a reluctance now to invest in LDC's?
 1. Political instability
 2. Lack of infrastructure
 3. Better opportunity for MNC capital elsewhere
 4. Lack of exchange
 5. Fear of nationalization and other impediments to a healthy investment climate
 6. Lackluster experience to date - "Once burned twice shy"

O TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- technology not a "thing", but a "process" - not a "secret" as much as a "system"
- technology has evolved only over much time at great costs
- technology is privately owned - cannot be bargained away between U.S. and host country governments - its transfer demands appropriate compensation and future profit opportunities



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- technology + capital + management, must be organized at right time, in right place and in proper sequence. MNC's are qualified to do this.
- MNC's need operating flexibility to integrate these factors
- Host country restrictions imposed on ownership and management of local units of MNC's and on uses of technology can seriously impair such flexibility

O U.S. GOVERNMENT MUST BE A PARTNER WITH BUSINESS, -NOT AN ADVERSARY

- only governments can negotiate with other governments to establish the climate necessary for cooperation, not confrontation
- MNC's are not in the business of making political decisions
- MNC's should not be the tools of U.S. foreign policy, rather they should be motivated by the U.S. government through negotiated international agreements which ensure an atmosphere conducive to profitable operations, political stability in host countries, and economic growth.

